
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”

The Master Speech Files, 1898, 1910-1945

Series 3: “The Four Freedoms” and FDR in World War II

File No. 1551

1944 October 28

Fort Wayne, IN - Informal remarks

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

OCTOBER 28, 1944

I am glad to be back again at Fort Wayne, whose citizens have done and are doing so much to help win the war.

I have heard some rather irritated comment by Republican campaign orators about my taking this campaign trip.

They don't like it.

They seem to believe that I promised them that I was not going to campaign under any circumstances and, that therefore, they could say anything they wanted about my policies and my Administration.

However, they conveniently overlook what I actually said in my speech of acceptance last July. I am going to quote from that speech -- and I am sure you will pardon me if I quote correctly: "I shall, however, feel free to report to the people the facts about matters of concern to them, and especially to correct any misrepresentations".

I believe that the American people know what those misrepresentations have been -- and just who have made them.

I think the American people know that in my speeches in this campaign, I have pointed out and corrected many of those misrepresentations.

I expect between now and Election Day to point out and correct more of them.

You good people in Fort Wayne/^{have} had first-hand knowledge of the great production job which has been done in this war. And, in this great railroad center you know how efficiently and quickly, the railroads all over the United States have delivered the goods.

It has been a tremendous job for these railroads, geared to the needs of a peace-time America, to be converted almost over-night to the demands of fighting the war. The way our railroads have transported munitions and men to all parts of the United States, and to our sea coast to be sent to our fighting fronts all over the world has earned the admiration and gratitude of the entire American people.

And do not forget that American railroad men are doing a fine railroad job in this war with our army all over the world. And a lot of them got their training right here.

I see by the papers that Indiana is "a doubtful state". That means that the people who run the public opinion polls cannot agree with each other as to which way the state is going on Election Day.

But there is one thing that is not doubtful about this state -- and that is the ability of its people to produce. That goes for Indiana's industries -- and Indiana's farms.

I hope that -- regardless of which party you support on Election Day -- you will produce a record crop of votes.

orig reading copy

Franklin D. Roosevelt

REMARKS Of The President
At Fort Wayne, Indiana

October 28, 1944, at 2.30 p.m., e.w.t.

Delivered From a Platform At The Railroad Stop

My friends of Fort Wayne: I have to say on this occasion "my friends of Indiana," because it is the only chance that I'll have to say just a few words in this State. This is a very big country, and of the forty-eight of the brethren, Indiana is only one; but I am glad to have a chance to come here, if only for these few minutes.

I have been here before several times, and I know that you citizens in this city have done and are doing so much to help us win the war.

I have heard some rather irritated comment by Republican campaign orators -- (laughter) -- rather irritated comment about taking a campaign trip.

They don't like it. (laughter)

They seem to believe that I promised them -- way back when I was nominated at the convention presided over by your Senator -- they seemed to believe that I was not going to campaign under any circumstances, and therefore that they could say anything they wanted to about my policies and my Administration.

However, they conveniently overlook what I actually said in my speech of acceptance last July, and I think the Senator will bear me out. I am going to quote from that speech very briefly -- and I am sure you will pardon me if I quote

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

it correctly -- (laughter) -- because, you know, a long time ago, when I was Governor of New York, I formed the habit of quoting correctly. (laughter and applause) And I said -- in the same paragraph -- I said I wasn't going to conduct the usual campaign. I said, however: "I shall, however, feel free to report to the people the facts about matters of concern to them, and especially to correct any misrepresentations."

So that is why I am going out to Chicago for another similar speech tonight. I believe the American people know what those misrepresentations have been. They know what they are, and they know just who made 'em. I think the American people know that in my speeches in this campaign I have pointed out and corrected many of these misrepresentations. (applause)

I have a conviction that the people of Indiana, the majority of the voters of Indiana know that I am the same Franklin Roosevelt who started in campaigns twelve years ago. (applause) And between now and election day I expect to point out and correct some more misrepresentations -- (laughter and applause) -- because if you are a betting person, the odds are that there will be a great many more misrepresentations. (laughter)

You good people in Fort Wayne have had first-hand knowledge of the great production job which has been done in this State, and in this great railroad center.

For example, you know how efficiently, how quickly railroads all over the United States have delivered the goods. (applause)

It has been a tremendous job for these railroads, geared to the needs of a peacetime America, to be converted almost overnight to the demands of fighting this war. The way our railroads have transported munitions and men to all parts of the United States and to our sea-coast, to be sent to our fighting fronts all over the world, has earned -- deserved the admiration and gratitude of the entire American people.

And do not forget that American railroad men are doing a fine railroad job in this war with all our armies and our navy all over the world. A lot of them got their training right here. I think these railroad men deserve to know what the American people think of them as doing their bit in this war, just as much as if they were in the uniform of the Army or the Navy instead of the uniform of the railroad.

And it so happens that I discovered, about an hour ago, that on my train there is a brakeman named Morrison. He used to live in Fort Wayne. He is the kind of person who is doing his job in this war. He is somewhere here on the platform with me. That is a pure coincidence -- but he is a type. And this year it so happens that he is running for the legislature in Indiana. (applause)

Well, I see by the papers that Indiana is a "doubtful State." (laughter) And there are a lot of other "doubtful States," according to the poll people. That means -- well, that means that the people who run the public opinion polls cannot agree with each other as to which way the State is going on election day.

Of course, I may have my hunch -- which happens to be the same hunch as the Governor of your State has -- (applause) -- and on several occasions our hunches have coincided -- have proved to be true. (laughter and applause)

But there is one thing that is not doubtful about this State and that is the ability of its people to produce. That goes for Indiana's industries and Indiana's farms. You have all been greatly helpful in conducting -- with other States -- the greatest war that this world has ever seen in all the centuries.

And I hope that regardless of which party you support on election day, you will produce a record crop of votes. (applause)

I -- I would hate to be re-elected by a little bit of a vote. (laughter) That wouldn't spell democracy. If I am re-elected, I want it to be a big vote. (applause) And if I should be defeated, I don't want to be defeated by a small vote. (laughter) I would always have the feeling that if everybody had come out and voted, I would be in again. (applause)

And so I just want to tell you that I am awfully glad to have a chance to make this stop.

I wish that I could campaign in the usual sense -- (laughter) -- but you know, as I said last night, in some circles it's not the thing to do. I am in the middle of a war. And so are you. We are all in it. We are going to win it, if we keep on with the same splendid cooperation that we have had

in the past. It is quite a job, but I am perfectly able to take it, and you are too, until we win. (applause)

And so let me tell you that I am glad to see you, and I hope to come back once more in the next four years -- (laughter) -- as President of the United States. And as I said before, you will find me just the same, and I'll wear the same sized hat.

(laughter and great applause)

STATEMENTS FILE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OCTOBER 28, 1944

ADD FORT WAYNE SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT

It so happens that I discovered, about an hour ago, that on my train there is a brakeman aboard named Morrison. He used to live in Fort Wayne. He is the kind of person who is doing his job in this war. He is somewhere here on the platform with me. That is a pure coincidence -- but he is a typical American. And this year it so happens that he is running for the legislature in Indiana.

Of course, I may have my hunch about Indiana -- which happens to be the same hunch as Governor Schricker of your State ~~has~~ -- and on several occasions our hunches have coincided -- have proved to be true.

Now let me repeat: I hope that regardless of which party you support on election day, you will produce a record crop of votes.

I would hate to be re-elected by a little bit of a vote. That wouldn't spell democracy. If I am re-elected, I want it to be a big vote. And if I should be defeated, I don't want to be defeated by a small vote. I would always have the feeling that if everybody had come out and voted, I would have been in again.

And so I just want to tell you once more that I am awfully glad to have a chance to make this stop. I wish that I could campaign in the usual sense -- but you know, as I said last night, in some circles it's not the thing to do. I am in the middle of a war. And so are you. We are all in it. We are going to win it, if we keep on with the same splendid cooperation that we have had in the past. It is quite a job, but I am perfectly able to take it, and you are too, until we win.

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However, they conveniently overlook what I actually said in my speech of acceptance last July. I am going to quote from that speech -- and I am sure you will pardon me if I quote correctly: "I shall, however, feel free to report to the people the facts about matters of concern to them, and especially to correct any misrepresentations".

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knowledge of the great production job which has been done in this war. And, in this great railroad center you know how efficiently and quickly, the railroads all over the United States have delivered the goods.

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And do not forget that American railroad men are doing a fine railroad job in this war with our army all over the world. And a lot of them got their training right here.

I see by the papers that Indiana is "a doubtful state". That means that the people who run the public opinion polls cannot agree with each other as to which way the state is going on Election Day.

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10/20/44 Had by Mr. Harato for press release purposes.

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